

Friends of the Lynchburg Public Library

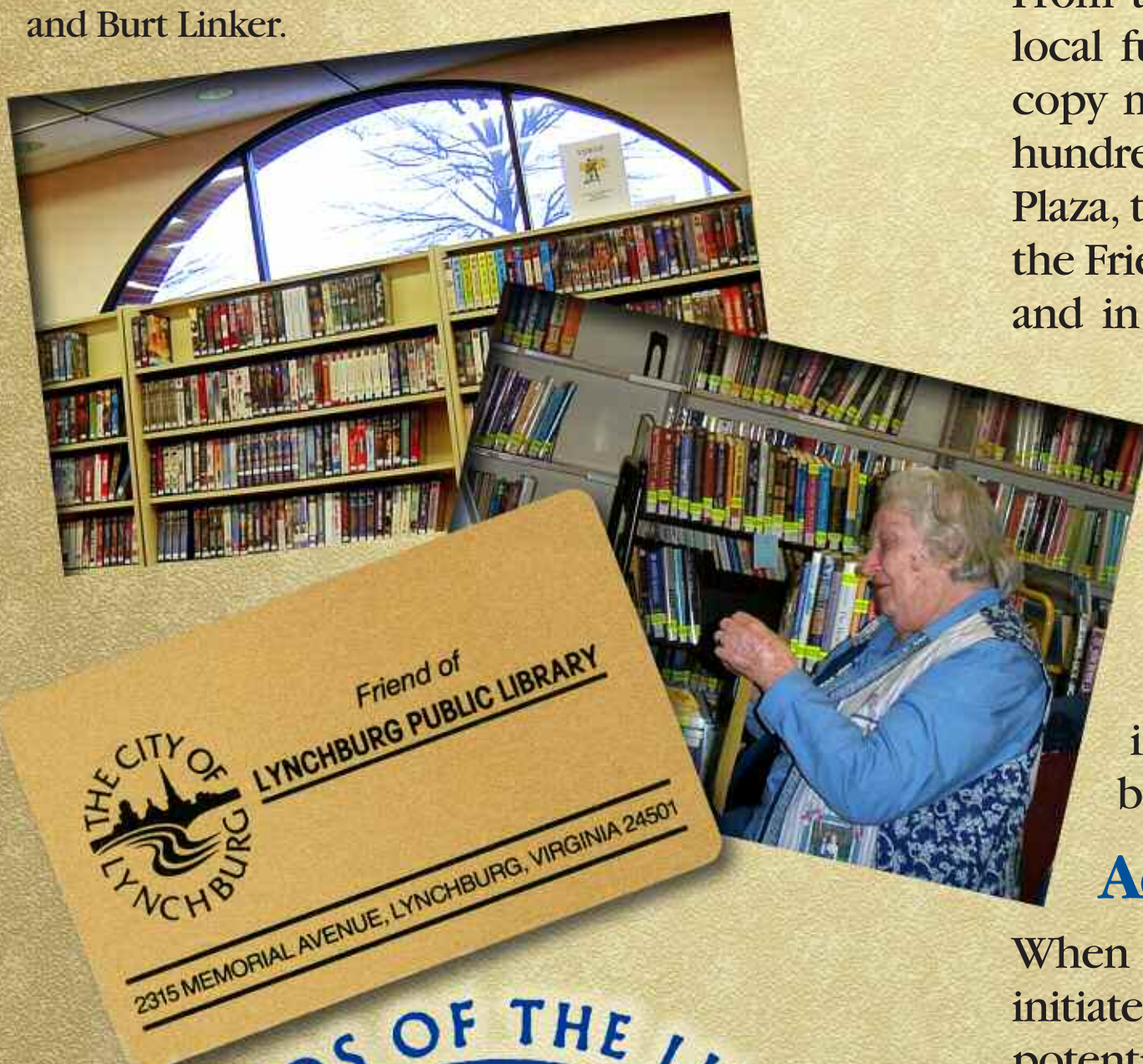
In 1964, a group of concerned citizens organized as Friends of the Lynchburg Public Library and began a grassroots campaign to convince the public and City Council of the need for a tax-supported public



The first officers of the Friends of the Lynchburg Public Library included (from left): J. Burton Linker Jr., Elliot S. Schewel, Mrs. H. C. Leggett Jr., and Mrs. W. Romney Watkins.



Founding Friends included (seated, from left): Pauline Weeden Maloney and Pat Doyle and (standing, from left) Sam Cardwell, Carroll Lippard, and Burt Linker.



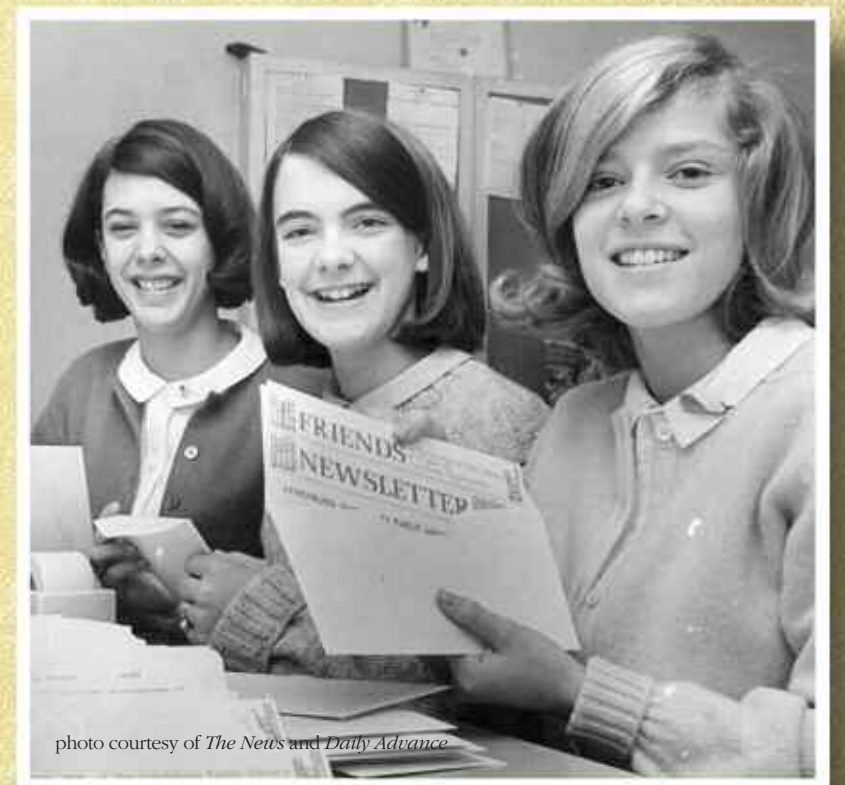
library for all citizens. As a result, the Lynchburg Public Library opened its doors at 914 Main Street on April 16, 1966.

The Lynchburg Friends group, one of the largest and most active in Virginia, continues to play a crucial role in making the library a vital force in the life of the Lynchburg community.

“They made a difference.”

On September 23, 1964, those who backed a public library held a public meeting at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church to formally organize as “Friends of the Lynchburg Public Library.” Officers and board members were elected, and operating by-laws were adopted.

The Friends implemented a grassroots campaign unprecedented in Lynchburg's history. Civic groups, churches, and scout troops were enlisted to canvass the city's neighborhoods and ask residents to join the Friends. Almost 5,500 citizens responded, making the Friends the largest dues-paying organization in the city. The success of the Friends' campaign convinced City Council to vote unanimously to apply for a state Demonstration Library Grant.



The Friends' campaign was supported by civic groups, churches, scout troops, and school service clubs.

Financial Support

From the beginning, the Friends have raised money to supplement state and local funding, primarily through membership and revenue from the library's copy machines. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Friends' funds helped bring hundreds of school children to library programs. When the library moved to the Plaza, the Friends raised \$20,000 for furniture and equipment. In the early 1990s, the Friends established the library's video collection with a donation of \$12,000, and in 2002 supported the inauguration of *Lynchburg Reads*, a community reading program. The Friends contribute annually to the children's reading program and provide funds to purchase adult books.

Volunteer Program

In 1995, the Friends established the library's volunteer program by providing funding for the part-time coordinator and committing to an annual appropriation. Volunteers of all ages perform many tasks, including computer data entry, shelf reading, inventory, and mending books. In 2005, 80 volunteers gave 3,000 hours of service.

Advocacy

When a local budget crisis threatened library funding in 2004, the Friends initiated a community-wide Advocacy Campaign to inform citizens of the potential impact on library service. Thanks to their efforts, more than 1,000 citizens contacted City Council members and funding was restored.

Donations and Endowment Funds

As a 501c3 tax-exempt organization, the Friends accept ownership of all donated items and retain the income from the sale of items the library cannot use. To provide a secure source of funding, the Friends also established an Endowment Fund in 1994. As part of the 2006 40th Anniversary Celebration, the Friends are sponsoring a \$140,000 Endowment Fund Campaign.